

Message Text

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ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 EA-06 IOE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5011

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 415

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1586

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR UNGA CB IC

SUBJECT: KHMER IN 29TH UNGA; FONMIN DIRECTS ICELANDIC ABSTENTION

REF: USUN 5400

1. ON RECEIPT REFTTEL, AMBASSADOR ATTEMPTED CONTACT FONMIN AGUSTSSON WHO HAS BEEN ILL FOR PAST SEVERAL DAYS AND WAS UNWILLING MEET WITH ANYONE. REPRESENTATION, THEREFORE, HAD TO BE MADE THROUGH SECGEN OF MFA PETUR THORSTEINSSON. POINTS WERE MADE TO THORSTEINSSON THAT IN CLOSE VOTE ABSTENTION MIGHT WELL BE TANTAMOUNT TO VOTE FOR EJECTION OF SITTING UN MEMBER AND THAT WE HAD BEEN TOLD ICELAND STOOD AS MATTER PRINCIPLE AGAINST SUCH EJECTION. AFTER TALKING WITH FONMIN, THORSTEINSSON REPORTED BACK THAT AGUSTSSON SAID HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS NOVEMBER 25 FOR ABSTENTION ON ALL MATTERS CONNECTED WITH KHMER ISSUE AND WAS ADAMANT THAT HE WOULD NOT CHANGE OR EXPLAIN THOSE INSTRUCTIONS.

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THORSTEINSSON SAID JAPANESE AMBASSADOR IN STOCKHOLM HAD ALSO

CALLED MINISTRY AND BEEN GIVEN SAME ANSWER.

2. COMMENT: THIS REGRETTABLE REVERSAL OF WHAT WE HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE WAS GOI POSITION PROBABLY STEMS FROM TWO CONCERNS ON PART OF FONMIN: (1) HE HAS BEEN UNDER CRITICISM FROM COMMUNISTS, MANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, SOME MEMBERS OF HIS OWN PARTY, AND SOME SECTORS OF THE PUBLIC FOR ICELANDIC VOTE ON PLO ISSUE, AND (2) FONMIN HAS FOR LAST FEW WEEKS BEEN SUBJECT TO UNMERCIFUL CRITICISM FROM LEFTISTS, AND ESPECIALLY FROM COMMUNISTS, FOR HIS ROLE IN ACCEPTANCE OF DEFENSE AGREEMENT. (EXAMPLE: COMMUNIST PRESS HAS INAUGURATED A CONTEST FOR THE MOST INSULTING, UNFLATTERING POEM ABOUT FONMIN.) SINCE HE IS BASICALLY A WEAK MAN WHO ALLOWS HIMSELF TO BE PUSHED IN POLICY MATTERS, HE IS SUBJECT TO PRESSURES ON ALL SIDES. IN THIS CASE, WE SUSPECT PRESSURE MAY HAVE COME FROM ICELANDIC PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORS ON GOI UN DELEGATION, MOST OF WHOM ARE LEFT-LEANING. BEING ON DEFENSIVE ON ISSUES NOTED ABOVE, IT IS IN CHARACTER FOR HIM TO MAKE DECISION DESIRED BY LEFTISTS, HIDE OUT, AND REMAIN ADAMANT. IRVING

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